Today's News - Wednesday, September 30, 2009

- Thumbs-up - and down - for Coop Himmelb(l)au's new performing arts high school in L.A.: "So much of the design's energy is devoted to functionless forms...intended to be experienced from the outside; inside, it takes on an "almost barracks-like quality."
- A look at the five finalists' designs for Auckland's Queens Wharf: "only one set to blow the allocated budget."
- Montreal's new Biodiversity Centre Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium will be oh-so green.
- Dillon keeps us up-to-date on the Calatrava bridge saga in Dallas.
- Populous wins bid to design 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games in Sochi, Russia.
- An in-depth look at the first and next 100 years of FLW's Unity Temple (things are not looking too rosy).
- Huxtable hails "Koolhaas Houselife": its "an affectionate but unflinching look at...what happens to a celebrated building after the photographers are gone."
- James Wines' thoughtful take on the value of hand drawing.
- Ando on his winery in Aix-en-Provence and "Sea Forest" project in Tokyo Bay.
- Green roofs are (slowly) catching on with NYC landlords as valuable tenant amenities.
- An eyeful of Balmori Associates' "Garden That Climbs Stairs" in Barcelona.
- Kaufmann finds a new champion for her green prefabs.
- Qatari investor in Chelsea Barracks and the Shard turns eye on Vietnam, "the world's fourth fastest growing construction market."
- We couldn't resist: AJ's 1960 review of Corbu's La Tourette: "one is left with grave doubts as to whether this method of design by a single omnipotent architect...can survive much longer."

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Crit: School for the Performing Arts: Coop Himmelb(l)au's new Los Angeles high school is a testament to the provocative power of art...So much of the design's energy is devoted to functionless forms that fundamentally, the school buildings are intended to be experienced from the outside. Once inside, things begin to take on a prosaic, almost barracks-like quality. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

How the five redesign finalists want Queens Wharf to look: ...only one set to blow the allocated budget. -- Andrius Gedgaudas; Field Landscape Architecture; Construkt/Sills Van Boheman (SVB); Tasman Studio; Williams Architects [link to images]- National Business Review (New Zealand)

Montréal's Nature Museums Present Their Life Plan, the Biodiversity Centre and Sketches of the Rio Tinto Alcan Planetarium -- Cardin Ramirez Julien; AEdifica; SNC Lavalin;;Fauteux et Associés Architectes Paysagistes- Canada NewsWire (CNW)

In Dallas, Fate of Calatrava Trinity River Bridge Hangs in Balance: Cost overruns, public opposition, and numerous federal reviews have slowed progress to a crawl...has left the future of the bridge—now christened the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge—up in the air. By David Dillon- Architectural Record

Populous [formerly HOK Sport] to design another Olympic main Stadium: ...selected to design the 40,000-seat main stadium for the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games in Sochi, Russia- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple, The First & Next 100: ...there is a 10% chance the church will move within five years...means a 10% chance the Temple will fall into disrepair shortly thereafter despite the Foundation's best efforts. By Jordan Melnick [images, links]- PrairieMod

Ingenious and Demanding: "Koolhaas Houselife," is a small, smart, gently ironic, thoroughly delightful film that offers an affectionate but unflinching look at the everyday life of a contemporary architectural masterpiece — or what happens to a celebrated building after the photographers are gone...This is the reality, and reality is never simple, but neither is architecture. By Ada Louise Huxtable -- OMA- Wall Street Journal

Drawing and Architecture: It may seem strange to champion hand drawing in 2009...I have been a long-standing supporter of dual skills...based on a deeply felt conviction that, by focusing exclusively on computer-generated illustration alone, something conceptually profound is forfeited in the design process. By James Wines [images]- Blueprint Magazine (UK)

Bono's Home Designer Tadao Ando Plans Art Center at Provence Winery: ...Chateau La Coste winery in Aix-en-Provence features a music pavilion by Gehry, a wine cellar by Nouvel, and other structures by Piano and Foster...These days, he is devoting time toward raising money for a "Sea Forest" project to transform a 217-acre landfill on Tokyo Bay into a forest.- Bloomberg News

A Green Amenity, Above It All: Some office buildings in New York are landscaping the roof, and offering access to all the employees in the building as amenities. -- FXFowle Architects; Moed de Armas & Shannon- New York Times

The Garden That Climbs Stairs: Balmori Associates' unusual design is one of 31 miniature urban parks built in Bilbao over the summer. [images, links]- Metropolis Magazine

New home for Michelle Kaufmann's prefab, green designs: ...[she] has sold the building rights...to Boston company Blu Homes...founders spent three years researching modular home construction with a teams...from the Rhode Island School of Design and MIT before starting the company. Their goal is to build...homes that are affordable to the average American... [images]- San Francisco Chronicle

Qatari Diar plans push into Vietnam: State-owned developer in talks with Vietnamese communist government over £600m investment fund...Davis Langdon ranked Vietnam as the world's fourth fastest growing construction market...- Building (UK)

From the Archives: La Tourette by Le Corbusier: AJ's original verdict on [his] Dominican Monastery in this article published on October 20, 1960: "...one is left with grave doubts as to whether this method of design by a single omnipotent architect...can survive much longer..." [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Copenhagen Design Week 2009: The focus was firmly on the local and national design community - and environmental sustainability...while classic, mid-century modern Danish design is inspiring, it's in the past; a new generation is looking towards sustainable and human-centered designs. By Terri Peters -- McDonough Braungart/Cradle-to-Cradle; Bjarke Ingles Group (BIG); 3XN [images]- ArchNewsNow

-- Zaha Hadid Architects: Cairo Expo City, Egypt
-- Richard Meier & Partners: ECM City Tower, Prague, Czech Republic

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